individual expenses of their own fire services including, fire stations, personnel and equipment.

There are fourteen fire districts in the state of Massachusetts, primarily responsible for coordinating mutual aid and other organized efforts among member fire departments. All MetroWest communities with the exception of Wellesley and Weston, are located within Fire District Fourteen. Wellesley and Weston are members of Metrofire Association Fire District Fourteen represents twenty one contiguous communities in and around the MetroWest subregion. The Weston and Wellesley fire departments belong to Metrofire Association an association of 34 fire departments and Massport, in the metropolitan Boston area.

Population and Development

Together, the nine communities of MetroWest form a suburban subregion within the MAPC, west of Boston. This subregion is approximately 160 square miles in size and in 1990 reported a total population of 208,693 people. Between 1980 and 1990, the subregion's population grew 2%, slightly greater than MAPC's regional average growth rate during that same time. A noteworthy change during that time period, a 32% increase in population in the town of Ashland. **Table 1** depicts community populations and forecasts.

Population forecasts prepared by the Metropolitan Data Center indicate that a steady growth is expected to continue for the subregion through the next decade. A comprehensive zoning map developed for this study[1] illustrates the possible future development patterns that will emerge in the subregion based on current land use regulations. This information is pertinent in planning for future public service needs, including the location of fire stations.

Table 1

POPULATION FORECASTS

1980–2010

TOWN	1980	1990	% Change	2000	% Change	2010	% Change
Ashland	9,165	12,066	32%	13,579	13%	14,836	9%
Framingham	65,113	64,989	0%	65,749	1%	65,818	0%
Marlborough	30,617	31,813	4%	34,581	9%	35,382	2%
Natick	29,461	30,510	4%	31,172	2%	31,476	1%
Southborough	6,193	6,268	1%	6,947	11%	7,087	2%
Sudbury	14,027	14,358	2%	15,469	8%	16,404	6%
Wayland	12,170	11,874	-2%	12,607	6%	13,228	5%
Wellesley	27,209	26,615	-2%	27,629	4%	27,296	-1%
Weston	11,169	10,200	-9%	10,408	2%	10,598	2%
MetroWest	**205,124**	**208,693**	**2%**	**218,141**	**5%**	**222,125**	**2%**

Source: US. Census Bureau 1980, 1990. MAPC Data Center, 1996.

Municipal Budgets and Finances

One of the compelling arguments in favor of intergovernmental cooperation is the potential cost savings to the participating communities. In order to evaluate the cost effectiveness of

[1] Prepared by the MAPC GIS Department, 1996. Located in the MetroWest office.